

U.S. MILITARY FORCES IN EAST TIMOR

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

A REPORT TO CONGRESS, CONSISTENT WITH THE WAR POWERS
RESOLUTION, REGARDING U.S. MILITARY FORCES IN EAST TIMOR



OCTOBER 8, 1999.—Referred to the Committee on International Relations
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THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, October 8, 1999.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: On September 15, 1999, the United Nations Security Council, under Chapter VII of the Charter, authorized the establishment of a multinational force to restore peace and security in East Timor, to protect and support the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), and, within force capabilities, to facilitate humanitarian assistance operations. In support of this multinational effort, I directed a limited number of U.S. military forces to deploy to East Timor to provide support to the multinational force (INTERFET) being assembled under Australian leadership to carry out the mission described in Security Council Resolution 1264. United States support to the multinational force has thus far been limited to communications, intelligence, logistics, planning assistance, and transportation.

Recently, I authorized the deployment of the amphibious ship, USS BELLEAU WOOD (LHA 3), and her embarked helicopters, to the East Timor region, including Indonesian waters, to provide helicopter airlift and search and rescue support to the multinational operation. Also, embarked in BELLEAU WOOD is a portion of her assigned complement of personnel from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (MEU (SOC)). At this time, I do not anticipate that the embarked Marines will be deployed ashore, with the exception of the temporary deployment of a communications element to support air operations.

At this point, it is not possible to predict how long this operation will continue. The duration of the deployment depends upon the course of events in East Timor and may include rotation of naval assets and embarked aircraft. United States support for this multinational effort will continue until transition to a U.N. peacekeeping force is complete. It is, however, our objective to redeploy U.S. forces as soon as circumstances permit.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

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